

9 Bowles Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
July 13, 2006

Minerals Management Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Re: Comments on the Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS on the Cape Wind Project
MMS Project ID: PRG-HQ-0005.

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my comments on the Environmental Impact Statement process for the Cape Wind Project. I urge you to accept the draft EIS that has already been completed for the Project, and allow the project to move ahead as expeditiously as possible.

I am an engineer on staff at the Renewable Energy Research Laboratory at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. However, I am submitting these comments as a private citizen, on behalf of my family and myself. I am not directly involved with the Cape Wind Project and do not stand to gain financially from it.

I have dedicated my engineering career to making clean power for the same reason that I write now: I believe passionately that clean energy is vital to our future on the planet. Our current energy practices are neither acceptable nor sustainable, and while all forms of energy have environmental consequences, wind power is our best option today.

Here, in brief, is my line of reasoning for why Cape Wind must move forward:

The energy status quo is unacceptable and unsustainable. No one questions that our energy mix will change. It *must* change because of its environmental toll – the electricity industry is one of the largest causes of environmental damage in the country. Furthermore, our energy mix will eventually have to change because it is based on unsustainable, depletable resources.

Change must and will happen. We have an opportunity here to be proactive and adapt with forethought.

All forms of energy have environmental consequences, though some are considerably worse than others. The list of electric generation's tolls is long – CO₂, CO, SO₂, NO_x, mountaintop removal, acid mine drainage, lack of adequate long-term storage for radioactive waste, oil spills, global climate disruption, acid rain, asthma, mercury in fish, premature death in the neighborhood of coal plants, melting ice caps, rising sea levels ... I could go on but these health and environmental impacts have been enumerated many times elsewhere.

To object to wind power because it has impacts is an environmentally myopic position. All forms of energy have impacts. The rational approach is to recognize the need to minimize the consequences of our energy use, and to turn to the energy forms with the lowest *net* impacts – wind power is indisputably in this set.

Wind power is one of the lowest-impact forms of energy available to us today. The immense problems caused by our energy use will require a many-pronged attack, and wind power will certainly be a big part of the solution.

Our best option is wind power, which fortunately is plentiful here in the Northeast. While we do not have the wide-open space used in other parts of the country for large land-based wind projects, New England's offshore wind resource is substantial. Offshore wind technology has been successfully implemented in Europe for over a decade, proving its practicality.

Cape Wind offers an important opportunity for significant supply of clean energy right here in New England.

“Not in my backyard” is not an acceptable answer. Of course it is incumbent on all of us to be concerned with potential abuse of the earth around us, but NIMBY-ism encompasses only a narrow view, and the environment cannot be understood narrowly. Ecology has taught us that the environment is not local, but global. We must balance the local impacts with the larger view of the region and the world. In the larger view, we know we need renewable energy, and we need to choose the most appropriate sites from the available options. Nantucket Sound is one of those sites.

Furthermore, **environmental justice** demands that we consider the effects of our electricity generation not only on those with wealth and power, but also poor and minority communities, on whom the environmental impacts of electricity production weigh most heavily.

Cape Wind is an environmental imperative. Cape Wind offers us a great opportunity to address our energy needs with a minimized environmental impact.

I look forward to the day when residents and non-residents of Cape Cod can look out on Nantucket Sound with pride and awe at the magnificent view of wind turbines, a powerful, positive statement of environmental stewardship and leadership.

I urge the Minerals Management Service to act in the spirit of stewardship and leadership, by approving the Cape Wind DEIS, and moving the project ahead as expeditiously as possible. We need offshore wind power. We need it in Massachusetts. We need it for our world and our children.

We need CapeWind now.

Sincerely,

Sally Wright, PE